



Your Congressman Reports

Danny K. Davis

Representative in Congress

August 2007 – 7th Congressional District - Illinois

The primary job of a Representative is to represent and in order to do that well I need to know what you are thinking, need your continuous involvement and participation. I continue to be pro-active in the district: townhall meetings, forums on issues, press conferences, meetings, speeches at conferences, conventions and other public policy events are a regular part of my agenda. The 7th Congressional District of Illinois is one of the most informed, knowledgeable and actively engaged districts in the nation. Let's keep it that way – please consider this an invitation and a word of encouragement to participate in townhall meetings during August and September.

To reach my office: 773-533-7520
www.house.gov/davis

<u>Date and Time</u>	<u>Townhall Meeting</u>	<u>Location</u>
8/6/07 – 7:00 p.m.	Berkeley	Berkeley Public Library, 1637 Taft Avenue, Berkeley
8/9/07 – 7:00 p.m.	Near West	St. Ignatius College Prep, 1076, W. Roosevelt Rd., Chicago
8/14/07 – 7:00 p.m.	Broadview/Riverside	Broadview Village Hall, 2350 S. 25 th Av., Broadview
8/15/07 – 6:00 p.m.	Business Development	Homan Square, 3333 W. Arthington, Chicago
8/16/07 – 7:00 p.m.	Forest Park/River Forest	Forest Park Village Hall, 517 Des Plaines Av. Forest Park
8/18/07 – noon	Annual Back-to-School Event	Columbus Park Refectory 5700 W. Jackson, Chicago
8/21/07 – 7:00 p.m.	South Loop	South Loop School, 1212 S. Plymouth Court, Chicago
8/22/07 – 7:00 p.m.	Maywood	Maywood Village Hall, 125 S. 5 th Av., Maywood
8/28/07 – 7:00 p.m.	Near West	Merit School of Music, 38 E. Peoria, Chicago
8/29/07 – 7:00 p.m.	Near South	2 nd Presbyterian Church, 1936 S. Michigan Av., Chicago
8/30/07 – 7:00 p.m.	Mental Health/Mid South	Provident Hospital, 500 E. 51 st St., Chicago
9/14/07 – 6:00 p.m.	Annual State-of-the-District	Malcolm X College, 1901 W. Van Buren, Chicago
9/15/07 – 8:00 a.m.	State-of-District/Business Procurement Opportunity	Malcolm X College, 1901 W. Van Buren, Chicago
9/22/07 – 10:00 a.m.	Annual Recovery Event	Union Park, Ashland and Lake Streets, Chicago

Where do you stand on the issues? Please write and let me know five (5) issues you would like me to work on. If its something we're already doing, that's good too. Sign up to participate in one of my advisory committees. Please write me at Suite 130, 3333 West Arthington Street, Chicago, Illinois 60624 or call 773-533-7520.

Post Office Makes Progress: Mail Delivery Improves



Congressman Davis presiding at the Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce, Postal Service and the District of Columbia. Ranking member Marchant is to Davis' right.

In response to concerns raised by citizens and businesses alike, I chaired a subcommittee hearing on mail delivery in Chicago on May 31, 2007. Appearing at the hearing to give testimony and listen to citizen complaints were the U.S. Postmaster General, the Great Lakes Regional Vice President of the Postal Service, the Chicago Postmaster, the Chicago Senior Plant Manager and the Inspector General. Also testifying were Representative Janice D. Schakowsky, Alderman Richard Mell, Alderman Robert Fioretti, a representative for County Clerk David Orr, along with representatives of the business community and private citizens.

After hearing all of the testimony, the postal officials gave some explanations and made a number of promises. At this juncture it has been

promises made, promises kept. In follow-up meetings with the Postmaster General and the Chicago Postmaster, Ms. Gloria Tyson, they reported to me that they have actually hired 270 new carriers, although for various reasons, 41 of those did not work out.

Ninety-four percent (94%) of the carriers are finishing their routes and are back in their stations by 6:00 p.m. All supervisors are receiving additional training, 40 managers have already been sent to a leadership training program, route walk teams are in place, the Inspector General's personnel are in the field and local advisory councils are being established at some stations. Significant improvement appears to be taking place and continuous monitoring will occur until Chicago has one of the best delivery rates in the nation. I am establishing a postal advisory committee, to serve on it please call 773-533-7520.

Legislative Briefs

My Second Chance Bill (HR1530) is still in serious negotiation and hopefully by the time you read this it will have been passed out of the House and on its way to conference. My NO vote helped to block efforts to cut Section 8 vouchers in the Chabot amendment to the Transportation, HUD Appropriations bill which would have cut funding for the HUD Section 8 Tenant Based Rental Assistance account by \$330 million. This amendment would have eliminated between 40,000 to 80,000 Section 8 tenant based vouchers.

Earmarks



Congressman Davis meeting with Bellwood Clerk Lena M. Moreland and Bellwood Mayor Frank A. Pasquale to learn about community priorities.

There has been a great deal of discussion about earmarks, or the legislative designation of money for specific programs, projects, institutions and or activities. In some instances the earmark process has been abused and misused causing people to oppose the earmark process and to call for a high level of transparency. I have always been in favor of letting my constituents know when I got an earmark, where it went, who it was for and what they were going to do with it. Many of the earmarks in the 7th District are selected as a result of consultation with local officials regarding local priorities. I am confident that had there not been earmarks, several of the not-for-profits for which I have secured earmarks would have never received one dime from the Federal government.

“Education is Still Key”

In the 110th Congress we have lowered the interest rates on student loans, preserved programs like Upward Bound, increased Pell Grants, increased aid to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Native American and Asian Pacific Institutions and a new category in with I took a particular interest, Predominately Black Institutions. Under this program institutions like Chicago State University, Malcolm X College, Kennedy King College, Olive Harvey College and Harold Washington College will be eligible for additional resources. It gives me special pleasure that in the College Cost Reduction Act, I along with Representatives Courtney and Shea-Porter, was able to get an amendment passed in committee which increased the Pell Grant authorization by \$900,000,000.

The Teacher Incentive Fund allows states and school districts to apply for federal grants in order to develop and implement performance based compensation systems for teachers and principals. With the Teachers Incentive Fund, educators who improve student achievement in the classroom are provided with financial rewards such as bonuses or increased salaries. To date, thirty-four grantees have received money, but the Department of Education has received one hundred and fifty applications. The Chicago Public School System received a grant of \$27.5 million from this program in 2006, which is highly touted by Mayor Daley and schools CEO Arne Duncan. In response to requests from local school systems I have supported an increase in the Teacher Incentive Fund of \$21 million.

Saving Jobs in the Confectionary Industry

As co-Chairman of the Congressional Sugar Caucus I have worked with my colleagues Representatives Mark Kirk, Rahm Emanuel, Jeff Flake, Edward Markey, Donald Manzullo, Mark Souder and others to try and keep the price of sugar from continuing to rise because it is putting our food processing, candy making and other sugar using industries in serious jeopardy.

Chicago at one time was called the Candy Capital of America, but high domestic sugar prices have driven many of these businesses out of the area causing a tremendous loss of jobs and economic development opportunities. The way we handle sugar is pretty much laid out in the Farm Bill and has been the real culprit affecting prices. To help this industry and keep jobs in the Chicago area we need to reform the sugar program. I introduced legislation to do just that.

Health Care

Recent significant health legislation which I have supported include:

The CHAMP Act (Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act). The CHAMP Act commits \$50 billion for children's health. It reauthorizes and improves the Children's Health Insurance Program to protect the coverage of the six million children today covered by CHIP today and to assure coverage for as many children as possible. It protects beneficiary access to physicians by eliminating the scheduled 10% physicians payment reduction and extends the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund.

The Lewis/Weller Amendment. This amendment would prevent the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services from prospectively cutting an estimated \$24 billion over five years from inpatient services. When casting my yes vote on this amendment my remarks noted, "The 7th District has more hospitals and hospital beds than any other in America. These proposed cuts would limit and deny access to health care for thousands of residents and it would be unacceptable to permit that to ever happen.

On July 3, 2007 I visited the Hines Veterans Administration Hospital and extended a hearty 7th CD welcome to Mr. Nathan L. Geraths who was appointed Director of the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital in January of 2007. As Director, Mr. Geraths is responsible for a budget of more than \$326 million and over 2,100 full time equivalent employees. Hines is a complex, tertiary care referral center. Mr. Geraths came from the William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin. In my discussion with Mr. Geraths, he emphasized and focused on the mental health needs of veterans.

Representatives Davis and Carson and Senators Obama and Bayh Push Responsible Fatherhood Initiative



Congressman Davis speaking to a 7th District Townhall meeting on the Fatherhood Initiative.

Many people believe that after joblessness and overall poverty the most significant family or social problem in America is the absence of fathers in the home or the trend towards single family parenting. The United States has the highest number of single parent households with dependent children of any developed nation.

The 7th District has one of the highest rates of single parent families in the nation. Therefore, I have joined with Senators Barack Obama and Evan Bayh in the Senate and Representatives Julia Carson and Artur Davis in the House to introduce legislation to reduce barriers and promote responsible fatherhood. The Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act of 2007 removes government penalties on married families and offers support for fathers seeking to do the right thing and cracks

down on men who run away from their parental responsibilities. The bill will provide fathers with job training services and economic development opportunities while expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit to help non custodial parents to help support their families.

Congressman Danny K. Davis on the Issues

1. *The War in Iraq.* "We must make every rational effort to bring our soldiers home as quickly as possible. I voted against the war and support date certain withdrawal.

2. *Jobs Creation and Economic Development.* "Unemployment and the opportunity to work is of major concern, especially in the core inner city as well as some outlying suburban parts of the district. I favor a trade policy which protects U.S. workers, promotes increased rights, protections and wages at home and abroad and a more balanced approach which will reduce our trade deficit.

3. *Immigration.* “Emma Lazarus through her poem ‘The New Colossus’ helped to shape my immigration philosophy, especially the words: ‘Give me your tired, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shores. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me, I lift my lamp beside the Golden Door.’ With that said, I favor comprehensive immigration reform which:

- Protects our borders.
- Is fair to immigrants from all parts of the world.
- Punishes businesses which violate our labor laws.
- Provides a path to citizenship.
- Considers the plight of individuals from Africa and the Caribbean as well as other parts the world.
- Provides opportunities for U.S. citizens with some felony convictions to be employed.
- Keeps family units intact.
- Does not undercut wages for U.S. citizens.
- Provides a visa program that is transparent, tightly managed and ensures there is a regularized flow across our national borders.
- Improves trade, investment, aid, agreements and enforcement of applicable international and national laws to enable more people to live, work and raise their families and their living standards in their own countries.”

Foreign Affairs

My active interest in foreign affairs continues, especially Africa, the Caribbean and other under-developed third world countries. In March of 2007 I, along with other members of the Congressional Black Caucus, represented House Speaker Nancy Pelosi at the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Independence of Ghana in its capital city Accra.

I was a strong supporter of HR 180 the Darfur Accountability and Investment Act and am pleased that the House passed this legislation on July 31, 2007. The bill, authored by Rep. Barbara Lee, will require the Secretary of the Treasury to establish a list of companies whose business activities in Sudan directly support the genocidal practices of the regime in Khartoum. The measure authorizes state and local governments who choose to divest their pension fund holdings from companies on the list and contains “safe harbor” provisions for managers of mutual funds and corporate pension managers who choose to do the same. The measure also bans U.S. Government procurement contracts with companies on the Treasury list and authorizes the prohibition of these types of contracts at the state and local level. Although the government of the United States currently bans companies from conducting business operations in Sudan, millions of Americans are inadvertently supporting the Sudanese government by investing in foreign companies that conduct business operations there.



While in Ghana, Congressman Davis (accompanied by his wife, Vera G. Davis) toured the former slave dungeon, Cape Coast Castle, in support of continuing study of the history and legacy of the slave trade and its effect on the cultures, societies and economies of today. Davis is pictured at the Door of No Return where captives were held with little light, little water and no toilet facilities. This door led out to the slave ships and the ocean. Men and women leaving through this door were destined for a life of slavery or death and would never see their homeland again.

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